

CITY OF LODI  
INFORMAL INFORMATIONAL MEETING  
"SHIRTSLEEVE" SESSION  
CARNEGIE FORUM  
305 W. PINE STREET  
TUESDAY, MARCH 2, 1999

An Informal Informational Meeting ("Shirtsleeve" Session) of the Lodi City Council was held Tuesday, March 2, 1999 commencing at 7:00 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Council Members – Hitchcock, Mann (left at 7:55 a.m.), Nakanishi, Pennino and Land (Mayor)

Absent: Council Members – None

Also Present: City Manager Flynn, Deputy City Manager Keeter, City Attorney Hays and City Clerk Reimche

Also present in the audience was a representative from the Lodi News Sentinel and The Record.

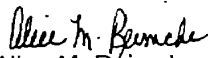
TOPIC(S)

1. Presentation Regarding ProStyle Sports

ADJOURNMENT

No action was taken by the City Council. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:15 a.m.


ATTEST:

  
Alice M. Reimche  
City Clerk

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CITY OF LODI - ADMINISTRATION - INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

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TO: CITY COUNCIL  
CITY MANAGER   
FROM: JANET S. KEEPER, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER  
SUBJECT: PROSTYLE SPORTS HANDOUTS  
DATE: 03/01/99

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Attached for your information are the following handouts in advance of the ProStyle Sports Shirtsleeve Session presentation:

1. Economic Impact of SNICKERS US Youth Soccer Regional Championships – provided by Bob Asklof, District VIII Commissioner of California Youth Soccer Association
2. Letter of support from Randel E. Vataha, Game Plan LLC – provided by John Vemer and Roger Theder

The aforementioned information was submitted to our office on Monday and was therefore unavailable for early distribution with the packet.

Attachments



**Game Plan  
LLC**

Robert L. Caporale  
Chairman

Randel E. Vataha  
President

100 Federal Street  
Mail Code 01-04-05  
Boston, MA 02110

Tel: 617-434-7217  
Fax: 617-434-7249  
rl.vataha@gameplanllc.com

March 1, 1999

Lodi City Council  
City of Lodi  
221 West Pine Street  
Lodi, CA 95241-1610

Re: *Pro Style Sports*

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen:

Over the past six months, our corporation has been consulting with *Pro Style Sports* regarding their Lodi, California project fronting Northbound Interstate 5.

We have conveyed to Mr. Verner and Mr. Theder that a multi-sport project of this nature located in Northern California could be extremely successful. While location is very important, the success of such a project will be based upon a strong financial component.

I am in the Bay Area frequently and would be happy to meet with the Lodi City Council to discuss this project further.

Sincerely,

Randel E. Vataha

REV:nmp

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*The Sports and Entertainment Industry • • • • Investment Banking and Consulting*



Robert L. Caporale  
Chairman

Raoul E. Valaha  
President

100 Federal Street  
Mail Code: 01-08-05  
Boston, MA 02110

Tele: 617-434-2237  
Fax: 617-414-7229

**CONSULTING AND INVESTMENT BANKING  
TO THE  
SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY**

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*The Sports and Entertainment Industry • • • • Investment Banking and Consulting*

## CONSULTING AND INVESTMENT BANKING

Game Plan provides consulting, advisory and investment banking services to the sports and entertainment industry. The principals of Game Plan have experience in virtually every phase of the sports and entertainment business and have been involved in every type of transaction within the sports and entertainment industry.

Game Plan provides consulting, financial advisory and investment banking services with respect to the acquisition, sale and financing of professional sports teams, the formation of sports leagues and the development and financing of sports facilities. The company maintains a complete database on franchise values and team sales and provides services to buyers, sellers, lenders, owners and investors in the professional sports industry. The company also provides services to professional sports leagues and to the entertainment, facility management, event management and lecture management industries.

## PRINCIPALS

The founders of Game Plan, Robert L. Caporale and Randel E. Vataha, have extensive experience and expertise in the sports and entertainment business including ownership, management, marketing and the representation of professional sports teams, leagues, athletes and sports facilities. The founders have been involved in the formation of professional sports leagues and have relationships with owners, investors, lenders and other individuals and entities involved in the sports and entertainment industry. Both Robert L. Caporale and Randel E. Vataha have been involved in the ownership and management of a professional football team.

BankBoston Corporation acquired a material ownership interest in Game Plan in December 1997. BankBoston Corporation, the 16th largest bank holding company in the United States with assets in excess of \$71 billion, operates a network of 650 offices across the United States and more than 100 offices in 23 countries in Latin America, Europe, Asia and Africa. BankBoston has considerable experience in the senior bank financing of professional sports teams and facilities and its Media and Communications Group ranks among the top five media and communications lenders in the United States. Although Game Plan is an independent company, its offices are located at BankBoston's headquarters which facilitates a close working relationship with the bank.

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***Robert L. Caporale***

Attorney practicing litigation, business and sports and entertainment law,  
1965-1997

Alternate Governor to the National Hockey League for the Pittsburgh Penguins,  
1991-1997

Attorney for Pittsburgh Penguins, 1991-1997

Attorney for New Boston Garden Corporation, owner and developer of the Fleet-Center, in connection with development and financing of the new arena in Boston which opened in 1995

Chairman of Boston Soccer, Inc., a non-profit corporation, and Chairman of Boston World Cup USA94 Host Committee

Trial Counsel in several major litigation matters involving professional sports

Attorney for Hartford Whalers (formerly New England Whalers) 1971-1994

Attorney for Boston Lobsters Tennis Team of World Team Tennis 1975-1979

Attorney for Edmonton Oilers, Hartford Whalers, Quebec Nordiques and Winnipeg Jets in transaction with NHL resulting in the teams joining the NHL in 1979

General Counsel of World Hockey Association 1978-1979

President and Part Owner of Boston Breakers Football Club, one of the original franchises in the United States Football League

Attorney for Florida Marlins in territorial claim arbitration proceedings

Attorney for buyers and sellers of professional sports teams in MLB, NBA, NHL, NFL, NASL, WFLA, USFL, AHL, FCIL and CISL

Chairman of Boston Bar Association Sports and Entertainment Law Committee  
1989-1994

Member of Board of Advisors of Red Auerbach Youth Foundation

Member of Sports Advisory Committee of Greater Boston Convention & Visitors Bureau

Member of the Board of Governors of the Boston Stock Exchange

Awarded the 1994 "Spirit of Business Leadership Award" by the Greater Boston Convention & Visitors Bureau and a 1995 "Leadership Award" by Massachusetts Governor William F. Weld in recognition of leadership in bringing World Cup Soccer to Boston

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**Rundel E. Vataha**

**NFL Player-Seven years 1971-1977 (Played for New England Patriots and Green Bay Packers)**

**Member of Executive Committee for National Football League Players Association (One of four man negotiating team for NFLPA with NFL owners in 1976-1977)**

**Asked to be President of National Football League Players Association**

**Founding member of United States Football League**

**Part Owner of Boston and New Orleans Breakers Football Club in USFL and President of New Orleans Breakers**

**Player Agent eight years with Bob Woolf Associates, Inc. 1987-1994**

**Negotiated major contracts in NFL, NBA, MLB and NHL as well as Media (Radio and Television) for clients such as Larry Bird (Boston Celtics), Joe Montana (San Francisco 49er's), Tom Glavine (Atlanta Braves) and Larry King (CNN)**

**Winner of two Emmy Awards for sports Broadcasting from the Boston/New England Chapter of the NATIONAL ACADEMY OF TELEVISION OF ARTS AND SCIENCES**

**CEO of Bob Woolf Associates 1987-1994**

**Structured deal between Marriott and Champions restaurants which resulted in 18 Champions restaurants in Marriott Hotels internationally**

**On Advisory Committee to NFL Players Association and NBA Players Association**

**Only agent to participate in NFL collective bargaining negotiations leading to current Collective Bargaining Agreement**

**Assisted in developing strategy for Freeman McNeil antitrust litigation (two of the eight plaintiffs were clients and Randy Vataha was the first witness in the trial)**

**Responsible for developing several of the concepts and provisions in the new NFL CBA**

**One of a small group that attempted to buy Wang Labs out of bankruptcy in 1993**

**Profiled in The Name of the Game is Life by Robert L. Shook and Ramon Greenwood, Contemporary Books, Inc., Chicago, Illinois, 1992**

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## COMPLETED TRANSACTIONS

### Pittsburgh Penguins--Sale of Interest

Retained by Howard Baldwin, Owner and Chairman of the Board, to identify investor and negotiate the sale of 50% of the Team. The project was successfully completed with the purchase of 50% of the Penguins by Roger Marino, co-founder of EMC Corp.

### Pittsburgh Penguins--Arena Lease

Retained by Penguins' ownership to renegotiate the financial terms of the lease agreement with SMG for Civic Arena. Game Plan successfully completed a new agreement with SMG which resulted in a benefit to the Penguins of \$1.5 million per year.

### Hillwood Investment Corporation

Consulting and investment banking services for Ross Perot Jr.'s company regarding the possible acquisition of the Dallas Stars (NHL). Game Plan's services included an analysis of the structure of transaction, analysis of new arena project and the preparation of a confidential report to Hillwood Investment Corporation.

### Bob Woolf Associates

Investment banking services for one of the premiere sports representation agencies in the United States. Game Plan successfully identified potential buyers and completed a 100% sale of the company to an ownership group comprised of Arnold Communications, Inc., Bobby Orr and Larry Moulter (former CEO of New Boston Garden Corporation and the new FleetCenter).

### Major League Baseball Team--Sale of Interest

Consulting on behalf of a corporate limited partner regarding the sale of its interest in a Major League Baseball team. Game Plan's services included an analysis of MLB franchise values and identification of prospective purchasers.

### Major League Soccer/Boston

Randy Vataha served as the Executive Coordinator of Major League Soccer Boston Bid Group which obtained the award of a Major League Soccer franchise to Boston (New England Revolution). The project included the development and implementation of a marketing plan to sell sufficient season tickets to meet bid requirements.



**Hockey International, Inc.**

Consulting and investment banking services for small group of investors in regards to possible acquisition of the Dallas Stars of the NHL. Services included an analysis of the proposed transaction and assistance in due diligence and preparation of a confidential report concerning the transaction.

**Pro In-Line Hockey**

Consulting and investment banking services for group of investors regarding formation of a professional in-line hockey league including development of structure of league and preparation of business and financial plan. Identification of and negotiations with strategic television partner and negotiation of agreement among the investors in new league.

**Calgary Stampeder Football Club**

Consulting and investment banking services to owner of Canadian Football League franchise regarding possible relocation of franchise to the United States including negotiation of stadium lease and negotiations with potential investors in the U.S.; representation of owner in negotiations with purchaser of team.

**Canadian Football League**

Preparation of strategic business plan for the Canadian Football League and participation in League television negotiations.

**Lawton Sport & Financial, Inc.**

Consulting and investment banking services to Lawton Sport & Financial, Inc. with respect to the sale of the sports representation agency to Advantage International, Inc., a subsidiary of The Interpublic Group of Companies, Inc. and the appointment of Brian Lawton as Director of the Hockey Division of Advantage International.

## CURRENT PROJECTS

### All American Football League

Consulting and investment banking services for an investor group regarding the formation of a new professional football league including development of the league structure, preparation of the business and financial plan and negotiation of stadium leases in major markets throughout the United States.

### Minnesota Hockey Ventures Group, L.P.

Consulting on behalf of group of investors regarding potential investment in the Minnesota Limited Partnership which has been awarded an expansion franchise in the National Hockey League to commence play in the 2000-2001 NHL season. Game Plan's services include an analysis of the offering, the structuring of the transaction, analysis of the new arena project for the construction of a new arena in St. Paul, Minnesota and preparation of a confidential report for the investor group.

### Major League Baseball Team--Acquisition of Interest

Consulting on behalf of an individual investor regarding the potential investment in a Major League Baseball team. Game Plan's services include an analysis of current ownership of a specific major league baseball team; analysis of assets and liabilities of the team and negotiation with current ownership on behalf of the prospective investor.

### American Program Bureau, Inc.

Consulting and investment banking services for Robert P. Walker and Perry F. Steinberg, Co-Owners of American Program Bureau, Inc., the leader in international lecture management and one of the largest lecture agencies in the world with approximately two hundred speakers under exclusive representation including Mikhail Gorbachev, Steve Forbes, Larry King and a number of present and former world leaders.

### Conventures, Inc.

Investment banking services for the largest event management company in New England including preparation of a Confidential Descriptive Memorandum and analysis of potential strategic alliances.

### Major League Baseball Team and Facility

Financial advisory and investment banking services on behalf of an investor group to assist in obtaining debt financing for the acquisition of a Major League Baseball team, facility and related properties.

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**Boston Stock Exchange, Inc.**

Consulting and investment banking services to the third oldest stock exchange in the United States with respect to potential strategic alliances and new business opportunities.

**GatesQuest Corporation**

Consulting to an international trading and consulting company with respect to the formation of a Chinese/American entertainment and sports joint venture company to do business in the People's Republic of China.

**Worcester Ice Cats**

Consulting and investment banking services to Roger M. Marino with respect to his investment in the Worcester Ice Cats of the American Hockey League.

**The Medalist Group LLC**

Consulting services to the Medalist Group with respect to the Medalist Tour comprised of 25 professional women golfers including Nancy Lopez, Jan Stephenson, Donna Caponi, Hollis Stacy, Jane Blalock, Sally Little, Sandra Post and others.

**Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum Authority**

Financial advisor to assist Authority in evaluating its options with respect to Oakland Athletics including possible sale of team to new ownership that would commit to long term license agreement with the Coliseum.

**The Jane Blalock Company, Inc.**

Consulting and investment banking services to golf and event marketing and management firm with respect to potential strategic alliances.

## MAJOR TRANSACTIONS COMPLETED BY THE FOUNDERS OF GAME PLAN

- World Hockey Association Merger with National Hockey League
- Acquisition of Boston Celtics Basketball Club
- Agreement between Marriott Hotels and Champions Restaurants
- Sale of Hartford Whalers to Local Ownership
- Sale of Wang Laboratories' Asia Operations
- Sale of Hartford Whalers to Connecticut Development Authority
- Sale of Bob Woolf Associates Sports Agency
- Sale of Lawton Sport & Financial, Inc. to Advantage International
- Acquisition of Pittsburgh Penguins Hockey Club
- Selection of Boston as 1994 World Cup Soccer Venue (six matches)
- Award of Major League Soccer franchise for Boston, MA
- Formation of Boston Breakers of the United States Football League
- Sale of New Orleans Breakers (USFL) to local ownership
- Development and Financing of FleetCenter, Boston, MA (home of Boston Bruins & Celtics)
- Sale of Foxboro Stadium to current ownership
- Acquisition of Minnesota North Stars
- Sale of 50% interest in Pittsburgh Penguins Hockey Club
- Selection of Boston as 1999 Women's World Cup Soccer Venue (five matches)

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## Fax Memorandum

**To:** Bob Asklof, California Youth Soccer Assn.  
**Fax:** (209) 367-8616  
**From:** Brent Goodrich  
**Date:** March 1, 1999  
**Re:** Economic impact of *SNICKERS*® US Youth Soccer Regional Championships

Following is a chart with the estimated economic impact of the four *SNICKERS*® US Youth Soccer regional championships held in 1998. The estimates were gathered from convention and visitors bureaus in each of the host cities. These figures are consistent with estimates from the 1996 and 1997 regional championships as well.

<u>Market (# of teams)</u>	<u>Visitors</u>	<u>Motel rooms</u>	<u>Estimated EI</u>
Albuquerque, N.M. (248)	12,000	3,500 nightly	\$4.2 million
Cincinnati (201)	10,000	3,000 nightly	\$4.0 million
Columbus, Ga. (144)	8,000	3,000 nightly	\$6.0 million
Erie/Edinboro, Pa. (268)	15,000	5,000 nightly	\$10.0 million

If you have any questions, please call me at (602) 274-1988.



# Soccer tournament ending two-year run at Erie County sites

By KIM CASTLEBERRY  
Staff writer

The Snickers U.S. Youth Soccer Region I Championship, which this week is expected to kick \$10 million into the local economy for the second consecutive year, will not return to Erie County in 1999.

When the tournament's final game concludes on Sunday, the Pennsylvania West Soccer Association's two-year contract with the competition's sponsor will be up. The event will move to Rhode Island next year.

The annual Snickers tournaments rotate every two years to new locations within the region, organizers said. Other regional sites this year include Albuquerque, N.M.; Columbus, Ga.; and Cincinnati.

"The tournament brings in about 15,000 people over the weekend, and

■ Please turn to 12A/SOCCER

## FAST FACTS

- **WHAT:** 1998 Snickers U.S. Youth Soccer Region I Championship
- **WHEN:** A kickoff event will be held today from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in Perry Square in downtown Erie. Opening ceremonies will follow at 6:30 p.m. at Edinboro University's Sox Harrison Stadium.
- **SCHEDULE:** Games will be held Thursday through Saturday beginning at 9 a.m. each day at Edinboro University and Family First Sports Park, 8155 Oliver Road. Finals will be held Sunday beginning at 9:30 a.m. at Family First.

## Soccer/Snickers tourney ends two-year run in area

■ Continued from 1A

they spend money on hotel rooms, restaurants and shopping," said Ben Carter, president of the Erie Area Chamber of Commerce. "So the tournament has a major financial impact on the city of Erie."

Carter said Erie will look toward continuing to attract events that have similar economic significance. "This event has been very positive for the community because it has given Erie the chance to showcase itself," he said.

The tournament will kick off today at 11:30 a.m. in Perry Square with two hours of events that include tests of participants' kicking strength and accuracy.

A crowd of 13,000 is expected for the opening ceremonies, which will begin at 6:30 p.m. today at Edinboro University's Sox Harrison Stadium, Route 6N and Perry Lane. The ceremonies will include a fireworks display and a parade of the soccer players.

Preliminary-round games are scheduled Thursday and Friday, and semifinal games and the regional championship finals will take place

will begin Thursday through Saturday at 9 a.m. and Sunday at 9:30 a.m.

The Pennsylvania West Soccer Association has scheduled games using 15 fields at Family First Sports Park and about 20 fields at Edinboro University. Family First, 8155 Oliver Road, will host all semifinal and final games.

The five-day event will feature 268 boys' and girls' teams representing 15 state soccer associations from Virginia to Maine. The teams will compete in nine age groups, with more than 450 games scheduled during the four days.

The winning teams in the under-16 through under-20 age groups will go to the Snickers U.S. Youth Soccer National Championship July 22-26 in Phoenix.

Nationwide, more than 7,000 teams and 130,000 players ages 11 to 19 are participating in this year's youth soccer championships.

There is no admission charge for games or the opening ceremonies, organizers said. For more information, call the Pennsylvania West Soccer Association at (412) 856-8011, officials said.

THE ERIE DAILY TIMES  
Wed., July 1, 1998  
Front Page

# Santa Ana Pueblo To Host Soccer Tourney Next Week

## Area Communities Hoping Field Investment Pays Off

By Andrew Padilla  
Journal Staff Writer

Several area communities invested \$1.1 million for soccer fields at Santa Ana Pueblo last year. Next week, they'll find out if the investment paid off.

More than 240 teams from throughout the Western United States will converge on the metro area next week for the five-day Snickers US Youth Soccer Far West Regional Championship.

Organizers say the tournament, from June 21-27, is expected to book 20,000 hotel room nights and bring about \$2.8 million to the Albuquerque metro-area economy.

"In addition to using our restaurants and renting vehicles, I'm sure they'll be shopping," Keith Arnold, president of the Albuquerque Convention and Visitor's Bureau,

said of the estimated 14,000 visitors expected for the tournament.

Last year, Rio Rancho, Bernalillo County and Sandoval County agreed to spend \$250,000 each, and the town of Bernalillo agreed to spend \$100,000 to add 14 fields to the eight-field New Mexico Soccer Complex.

The complex is near the town of Bernalillo on N.M. 44 and Jemez Canyon Dam Road.

The city of Albuquerque was asked to donate \$400,000 over 10 years, but the City Council, so far, has only committed to spending \$40,000.

Money collected will pay back \$1.1 million in bonds Sandoval County issued to add the fields.

The event has come to New Mexico before. In 1993, 130 teams played on makeshift soccer fields at the Grasslands Sod Farm just outside Los Lunas. In 1987, teams played on fields around Albuquerque.

Mickey Wilson, a member of the host com-

mittee for the New Mexico Youth Soccer Association, which helped organize the tournament, said the events have been successful in the past, but his association lost about \$20,000 in 1993.

"When you have to go out there to create fields from scratch, that gets a little costly," Wilson said. But, he said, Albuquerque's economy benefited immensely.

"Albuquerque Convention and

Visitor's Bureau woke up to the fact youth soccer in this venue is really economic development," Wilson said.

The visitor's bureau has been working with tournament organizers to book teams into area hotel rooms.

Arnold said that gives the visitor's bureau a count of how many rooms are being rented and allows it to survey spending habits while the visitors are in town.

The town of Bernalillo, which has only one hotel, is trying to take in

tourist dollars in other ways.

The town's Chamber of Commerce will have two vans shuttling soccer fans from the fields to its downtown eateries and shops.

The idea is to get people to spend money in Bernalillo, Community Development Director Maria Rinaldi said.

"Hopefully there'll be exposure to the community that will lead to return visitors," she said.

Rio Rancho, on the other hand, says it so far isn't benefiting much from the tournament.

Judi Snow, Rio Rancho's tourism director, said reservations at the city's four hotels are dismal.

"I expected that by this time we would probably be completely full," Snow said. "We have some bookings, certainly, but not nearly as many as I had anticipated."

The tournament will kick off with opening ceremonies Sunday in the Pit, said Carol Rhodes, chair of the tournament organizing committee.

The Far West Regional has 248 teams from 14 Western states. Each team had to qualify for the tourna-

ment by winning a United States Youth Soccer Association state cup.

Games will begin June 22, running from 8 a.m. to about 8 p.m. Each team is put in a pool of four, with round-robin games set against each of the other teams in the pool. The top teams from each pool meet in the quarterfinals June 25, with the semifinals set for the following day. The finals will be June 27.

There are eight age divisions, starting at 12 and ranging to 19.

Winners from the four oldest age groups will advance to the national finals July 22-26 in Phoenix.

The tournament brings together many of the West's top players, making it a mecca for college recruiters.

"The best teams are here," said University of New Mexico women's coach John DeWitt. "In general, the best players are on the best teams. I'd say 90 percent of the Division I schools in the West will send a representative."

Glen Rosales contributed to this report.

ALBUQUERQUE JOURNAL  
Mon., June 15, 1998  
Front Page



► City has great facility, but talent plays elsewhere. Guerry Clegg column/C1

► Nearly 250 college coaches in town in search of talent/C1

► Summaries of every game, including scoring, tournament schedule, standings/C8-C9

## Columbus ponders its soccer future

► Some changes needed at soccer complex to lure more and bigger tournaments

By Andrew DeMino

Staff Writer

With the biggest event to hit the Woodruff Farm Road Soccer Complex in full swing, organizers are now setting their sights higher.

More than 8,000 people — including 2,700 players from 11 Southern states — have taken over Columbus this weekend for the 1998 Snickers US Youth Soccer Regional Championship. The event has filled motels as far away as Warm Springs and LaGrange.

The turnout and high expectations have Rick Gordon, executive director of the Greater Columbus Sports and Events Council, thinking about what's next.

"Right now, we're just in the process of strategizing and figuring out where to go from here," Gordon said. "We're mainly just trying to come up with a soccer vision for the city."

And that vision — while still fuzzy — is an ambitious one.

At the top of the list is a national youth tournament, which would be the next step beyond this week's event.

See **SOCCER**, A10

LEDGER-ENQUIRER  
Columbus, GA  
Sunday, June 28, 1998  
Front Page



## **SOCCER** / From A1

In order to host a finals and other high-profile events, Gordon said more changes need to be made to the 11-field Woodruff Farm Road complex.

The complex was expanded to include five international-size fields with irrigation and lighting. The total cost of the expansion was about \$2 million. The complex was expanded through a partnership between the city and private businesses.

The next major development could be the construction of a championship stadium, which would seat as many as 4,000 spectators. Possible stadium construction, along with an indoor facility, are the topics of a

series of meetings between the Sports and Events Council and local citizens. No plans have been finalized to continue the expansion.

Fans and players have praised Columbus' complex as an ideal venue for large tournaments. The next one is already booked. David Holt, this week's tournament director, said he has lined up a statewide competition for August.

"Without a doubt, this is the best soccer complex that the state has to offer," Holt said.

Coach Greg Sheen, of Georgia's Tophat team from metro Atlanta, said that is why Georgia officials selected Columbus for

their 90-team state tournament.

"It's so open and spacious here, which is better than a lot of the other complexes that try to cram it all in," Sheen said. "This gives us an opportunity to do things that we've never been able to do."

In addition to a possible national youth tournament, the complex could host a college tournament or championship in the near future, Gordon said.

Officials from the Sports and Events Council have been talking with the Southeastern Conference about its soccer finals. In the last year, the SEC has held four championships in Columbus — 1997 baseball, 1998 women's

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basketball and the 1997 and 1998 softball.

The current youth tournament is the first large event the complex has hosted since its second phase of construction began a year and half ago. It is the first time five new fields have been used.

The regional has offered the city a perfect chance to showcase the facility.

"This event helped us to build the five fields," Holt said. "It also gave us the opportunity to show others what we have to offer."

"As we continue to bring events here on this level, we're hoping to gain more attention nationally and internationally."

**LEDGER-ENQUIRER**  
Columbus, GA  
Sunday, June 28, 1998  
Page 2 of 2



## Champs crowned

► Atlanta Football Club Lightning and Shaw High's Marshall Leonard defeat South Texas 1-0 in overtime to win under-18 boys championship/■1

► Georgia's Tophatters '97 Gold team, losers in the regional semifinals each of the last two seasons, shuts out Florida 2-0 to win under-19 girls championship/■4

► Complete roundup and summaries of all boys and girls championship games/■4

► World Cup roundup/■4



Kevin Smith, right, the head coach of the North Texas soccer team, uses sugar packets to discuss field plays on a table at Cafe Di Italia. Robin Trimmaroli Ledger-Enquire

# Soccer keeps visitors busy

► Many of the tournament families tried to be thrifty during their stay here

By Andrew DeMillo

Staff Writer

Soccer players and their families had little time for anything other than the 1998 Snickers US Youth Soccer Regional Championship.

Even so, they came. They saw. And they spent.

The regional economic impact from the six-day tournament is expected to be \$6 million, according to estimates by the Columbus Convention & Visitors Bureau.

About 8,000 people came to Columbus for the tournament, which ended Tuesday. Each

person was expected to spend an average of \$167, based on a 3.5-day stay.

One of the winning teams — the North Texas Solar Under 15 boy's team — spent \$15,505 in Columbus, including \$7,280 for rooms at the Sheraton on Airport Thruway.

Parents of the team, which won the regional championship Tuesday morning, said they tried to be thrifty.

"This week has been all business for us," said Vickie Bars, whose son Taylor is a defender for the team.

"Other than eating out and the tournament, we really haven't had time to go anywhere else around here," Bars said.

Forty-seven players and

See **SOCCER**, A12

## Financial kick

18,000 soccer players, coaches and family members flocked to Columbus for the 1998 Snickers US Youth Soccer Regional Championship.

**TEAM:** North Texas Solar, Dallas  
**ARRIVED:** Last Wednesday  
**DEPARTED:** Tuesday with under-15 boys' championship  
**PLAYERS:** 47 people, including coaches, parents and players

**\$15,505:** Estimated amount spent during seven-day trip  
**\$7,280:** Lodging at Sheraton  
**\$8,225:** Food and other expenses

Alan Keesee & Dan Coker/Ledger-Enquire

LEDGER-ENQUIRE  
Columbus, G  
Wed., July 1, 199  
Front Page

## SOCCER / From A1

family members came with the Texas team, and most parents said they used a number of cost-cutting techniques.

For meals, for example, they frequented fast-food and family restaurants.

"We've been trying to stick with places where meals have been about \$6 or \$7 at most," said Claudia Purvis, whose son Evan is a forward. "We'll end up eating at fast-food places for lunch and nicer restaurants at night."

The daily average for meals for the 47 people was \$1,175, or \$25 per person. The Convention & Visitors Bureau estimated food expenses to be \$53 per person over a 3.5-day period.

Many local restaurants said the tournament boosted sales.

"Every night has been like a Friday night for us," Gus Peluso,

owner of Cafe Di Italia, said. "We've turned away as much business as we have handled."

Jeff Dickert, general manager of Applebee's, had to bring in more employees this past weekend.

"We've had a 10 percent increase in sales since they came in town," Dickert said. "That's about the normal range for a large event like this."

Many of the visitors said an event like this requires creative preparation. To cut costs, the Purvis family did laundry at Fort Benning.

"That really helped us save some money," Purvis said. "It was about 50 cents a load, which is at least half of what we normally spend."

Ray Jackson, whose son Jake is a midfielder for the team, said he and his family of four

budgeted for the trip.

"We planned on spending about \$1,000 at most for this trip," Jackson said. "We've pretty much stuck to that."

That budget also included money for his wife, Dana, to buy two "exterminator tanks," multi-purpose spray tanks, from Wal-Mart for about \$10.

"We've been filling them up with ice water and spraying everybody with them," Jackson said. "It's a good cheap way of keeping cool."

The Long family packed a "virtual refrigerator" in their car to cut down on meal expenses.

"On the way here, we'd just stop on the side of the road and would have a picnic," Donna Long said. "It's also helped when the kids wanted something to snack on while we're here."

With sports as the focus, entertainment was not generally on the list of things to do.

"Normally, what we find with sports events is that they usually stick to the events themselves and don't do too much outside of it," said Brenda Price, executive director of the Convention & Visitors Bureau. "When you spend most of your day doing high physical activities such as these, the last thing you want to do is go out and do more things."

But there's always the exception.

Linda Smith and her family turned the trip into a "semi-vacation."

"I think we've tried to do every kind of tourist activity possible," Smith said. "From Callaway Gardens to Peachtree Mall, I think we've probably seen just about all of the city."

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Columbus, GA  
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# Soccer swarm headed our way

10,000 may boost  
economy by \$4M

BY LUCY MAY  
The Cincinnati Enquirer

An estimated 10,000 soccer moms, dads and kids from across the Midwest will descend on Cincinnati this weekend for the U.S. Soccer Youth Regional Championship in Anderson Township.

The visitors will kick \$4 million into the local economy, said Jim Martella, executive director of the Ohio South Youth Soccer Association. The Greater Cincinnati Convention & Visitors Bureau estimates that number at \$4.5 million.

The event — one of four regional championships — is a big deal in youth soccer terms, too, Mr. Martella said. "This is the road to the Final Four."

Top boys and girls teams in age divisions from 13 to 20 will advance to the U.S. Youth Soccer National Championship in Phoenix next month.

For the Midwest tournament, the association has booked 3,000 rooms in nearly three dozen hotels, Mr. Martella said. Families, players and coaches will start arriving Thursday and stay as long as next Wednesday, the last day of the tournament.

The Holiday Inn Eastgate is the host hotel, but soccer types will fill rooms as far south as Boone County.

While the 3,260 participants will play their nearly 350 tournament games at Clear Creek Park in Anderson Township, downtown Cincinnati will feel the crunch from the crowds Friday.

The association expects 10,000 people to attend opening ceremonies at 5:30 p.m. at The Crown, just in time for rush hour.

They should feel at home. The Soccer Industry Council of America in Palm Beach, Fla., ranked Cincinnati and Hamilton County as the second-highest metropolitan area for soccer participation in 1997. Kansas City was first.

Soccer moms and dads in minivans won't be the only amateur sports enthusiasts crowding local roads and hotels.

The U.S. Elite Road Cycling Championships will take place Thursday through Sunday in Loveland and downtown.

In all, 375 cyclists will take part, many of them competing for spots at the World Championships and 2000 Olympic Games.

The cycling event was one reason soccer visitors had to be spread over so many hotel rooms, Mr. Martella said.

THE CINCINNATI ENQUIRER  
Wed., June 24, 1998  
Front Page

# Soccer series just a big party

BY CHRISTINE WOLFF

The Cincinnati Enquirer

## ANDERSON TOWNSHIP

— The snow cone count sits at 5,000. Drinks number 1,000 cases, and ice is coming in by the truckload. Hamburger and hot-dog buns stack up to about 16,000.

Conservatively, that should begin to feed and cool off the crowd of 10,000 soccer players and fans expected beginning this weekend at Clear Creek Park.

"We have plenty more stuff on hand. When you throw a party like this, you don't want to run out of food," said Molly McClure, executive director of the Anderson Park District.

Clear Creek Park — 100 flat acres of lush, green grass stretching north off Ohio 32 near Newtown — is host for the Snickers U.S. Youth Soccer Midwest Regional Championship, a five-day tournament running Saturday through Wednesday.

The tournament will bring about 3,260 players in 350 games to Clear Creek's 20 soccer fields. The event is the biggest so far at the 2-year-old park, one of the newest in the Anderson Park District.

A sign to mark Clear Creek Park's entrance goes up today.

Wednesday, park officials worked on details. Center stage is the Oasis, a shelter area built last June. A concession stand and restrooms extend out the sides in movable trailers; the park, in a flood plain, soaked under about a foot of water during the '97 flood.

Large, striped tents in blue, red and green dot the acreage to give players shade on the treeless tract.

## If you go

► **What:** The Snickers U.S. Youth Soccer Midwest Regional Championship.

► **Where:** Clear Creek Park, 6518 Ohio 32, Anderson Township, west of Newtown.

► **When:** Saturday through Wednesday.

► **Times:** Non-stop soccer games, Saturday, Sunday, Monday, 8 a.m. to 6:15 p.m.; Tuesday, semifinal games, 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.; Wednesday, finals, 8 a.m. to noon.

► **Cost:** Free.

► **Parking:** Free, on site.

**Tips for spectators to weather the expected 90-plus-degree heat:**

► Bring lawn chairs. No bleacher seating provided.  
► Wear sunscreen and a hat, or bring an umbrella.  
► Drink plenty of water and juices. Avoid caffeine drinks and alcohol.

Pump engines chugged, trying to drain rainwater from gullies. Twenty sky-blue portable toilets will supplement the park's regular facilities.

Parking for about 3,000 cars will be available, park officials estimate. Park rangers and several Hamilton County sheriff's deputies will handle traffic control on two-lane Ohio 32 — the only way in and out.

Clear Creek — named for the creek running along its north treeline — opened in 1996, about the same time the park district booked the mega-

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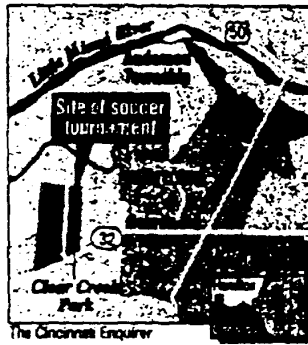
## Soccer: Lots of ice-cold drinks ready

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soccer tournament.

John Hixenbaugh looks forward to the line of soccer-going cars flowing from hotels around Interstate 275 down Ohio 32, right in front of his AmeriStop Food Mart in Newtown, a couple of miles east of Clear Creek.

"Any sunny weekend is good for us. Something like this is icing on the cake," Mr. Hixenbaugh said. "I'll order close to double what I would normally order in drinks. I won't be able to keep water and Gatorade in stock."



# Fields of dreams

Soccer tournament  
fulfills developer's  
vision of Family First  
Sports Park.

By KIM CASTLEBERRY  
Staff writer

When Gary W. Renaud envisioned Family First Sports Park in 1994, he saw children.

Four years later, the park's fields are swarming with more than 5,000 boys and girls competing in the 1998 Snickers U.S. Youth Soccer Regional tournament, which began Thursday and concludes Sunday.

"God placed a vision in my heart to use sports as a way of getting out into the community and helping those who are in need," said Renaud, the park's developer and chief executive of Erie Steel Products Co.

"The park aims to try and help children develop character and make appropriate lifestyle decisions," he said. "We want to talk to them about issues they have to deal with, like promiscuity and drugs."

By focusing on team sports, Family First strives to teach children about the importance of values like honesty and integrity, said Gary Smallshaw, the facility's marketing director.

When Family First opened in November 1994, it focused on soccer, with two indoor fields and 20 outdoor fields covering 70 acres in Summit Township.

Those fields helped the park land the Snickers U.S. Youth Soccer Regional Championship series in 1997. This is the second year that Family First, along with Edinboro University, has been involved with the tournament for players ages 11 to 19.

The Snickers competition is the third major soccer tournament to be played at Family First this year. The facility hosted the USA Continental Alliance Cup over Memorial Day weekend and the Flagship Tournament in June.

But soccer is no longer the only sport at Family First.

"We have really tried to get away from the soccer-only mentality by having tournaments and camps that include basketball, football and volleyball in addition to soccer," Smallshaw said.

"I never envisioned having football in the program," Renaud said. But the park hosted a four-day football camp last weekend that included nine professional athletes and 160 participants.

The \$2.1 million sports facility at 8155 Oliver Road was developed on

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## Soccer/Tournament

■ Continued from 1C  
land owned by First Assembly Of God. The church leased the land to Renaud for \$1 a year for 40 years.

Most of the initial funding came from the Renaud family and a fund-raising campaign.

"First Assembly of God is a very outgoing church and has provided numerous services for the community," Renaud said. "The church leased the land on its own benevolence and desire to do more for the community."

Although Family First is a for-profit facility, it includes a nonprofit program called Sports Outreach. Through scholarships, the program helps needy children take part in the leagues, clinics and camps.

"By providing scholarships, we aim to get as many children as possible involved with the park," Renaud said.

With a 12,000-square-foot fitness center scheduled to open in Septem-

ber, however, the park is also using sports to include adults, Smallshaw said.

"One of the biggest problems facing families today is finding time to spend together," he said. "We want to make Family First a place where everyone can come and play."

The health center is intended to give parents a place to go while their children are playing soccer or basketball, Smallshaw said.

Although the fitness center will be more adult-oriented, the park's primary focus will still be on children, Smallshaw said.

"We hope to get more and more kids involved with the park and to keep offering them additional programming," Renaud said.

The Snickers U.S. Youth Soccer Region I Championship will conclude Sunday with the championship finals scheduled to begin at 9:30 a.m. at Family First.